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KSDK

Missouri Congressman Russ Carnahan joined a coalition of U.S. House members urging BP to put more effort on ending the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

Carnahan, along with 47 other congressmen, wrote a letter to BP CEO Tony Hayward, advising him to remain focused on the recovery effort instead of BP's marketing campaign and dividend payments until the situation is remedied.

"BP must focus their attention on fixing the leak and cleaning up this mess without passing on the expense to taxpayers," Carnahan said. "We must then strengthen regulation of the oil industry to make sure this never happens again."

According to published reports, BP is spending tens of millions of dollars in TV and newspaper ads since the spill.

The coalition wrote the letter June 8 in response to an announcement from BP earlier that day stating the company would continue with an annual \$10 billion dividend payment it announced a week after the Deepwater Horizon explosion.

According to a Credit Suisse estimate, the potential cost of recovery efforts is approximately \$37 billion if the well is capped in August.

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